

Annual Report on Serious Injuries and Deaths

What does this information mean?

These tables show the annual number of serious injuries, deaths, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in child care settings throughout Missouri.

Our goal is to keep children safe. We have rules in place for these child care settings, regularly inspect them, and provide training and support to help programs and providers understand and meet these rules. However, children are naturally curious explorers and sometimes get hurt, even under ideal conditions. Also, child care providers sometimes unknowingly or knowingly violate the rules, which may result in a child injury.

Where does this information come from?

Child care providers are required to report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Office of Childhood when a child is seriously injured or dies in care, even if it wasn't the result of a rule violation (45 CFR 98.42(b)(4)). The total number of substantiated child abuse and neglect investigations in child care settings is based on data provided by the Department of Social Services, Children's Division.

What types of child care does this information apply to?

Included in this report is the annual number of serious injuries and deaths that were self-reported by eligible child care providers. Eligible child care providers are regulated and inspected by DESE.

- **Licensed child care center:** A child care program where care is provided for any age range and any number of children for any part of the 24-hour day.
- **Licensed group child care home:** A child care program where care is provided for any age range and no more than 20 children for any part of the 24-hour day.
- **Licensed family child care home:** A child care program where care is provided for any age range and no more than 10 children for any part of the 24-hour day.
- **License-exempt religious operated:** Care provided for any age range and any number of children for any part of the 24-hour day that is maintained and operated under the exclusive control of a religious organization.
- **License-exempt nursery school:** Educational child care program for any number of preschool-age children operated for no more than four hours per child per day.
- **Exempt provider caring for six or fewer children:** Care provided for 6 or fewer children for any part of the 24-hour day, usually for family, friends, or neighbors in the provider's community. These programs are regulated and inspected if they have an active contract with DESE to receive childcare subsidy on behalf of eligible families.
- **Other exempt:** Other child care programs are not required to be licensed by DESE in

accordance with Section 210.211, RSMo. These programs are regulated and inspected if they have an active contract with DESE to receive child care subsidy on behalf of eligible families, and can include:

- **Summer Camps:** Care provided over summer break, between May 1 and August 31, for school-age children that is recreational in nature, featuring outdoor activities, sports, crafts, or other special interests. Summer camps that allow children under 5 years of age to attend may require a license to operate. Summer camps tend to take various field trips throughout the summer.
- **Day Camps:** Care provided on days when school is not in session for school-age children that is recreational in nature, featuring outdoor activities, sports, crafts, or other special interests. Day camps that allow children under 5 years of age to attend may require a license to operate. Day camps most often take place during scheduled school breaks, such as fall or spring breaks.
- **Child Care Programs Operated by School Systems:** Care provided for any age range or number of children for any part of the 24-hour day. The program is operated by the school system, whether it is a public, private, or religious elementary or secondary school.
- **Montessori Schools:** Care provided for any age range or number of children for any part of the 24-hour day. The program is operated by a school that is a member, seeking accreditation, or accredited with a recognized national or international Montessori organization.
- **Child Care Programs Operated as a Business for the Convenience of Customers:** Care provided for customers' or employees' children for no more than 4 hours per day per child, as long as the customer or employee remains on site while the children are being cared for. An example of a program like this is a child care program operated at a gym that gives parents the opportunity to attend a workout class while their child is being supervised in the child care program.

What do serious injury, death, and substantiated child abuse in child care mean?

Child care providers are required to report the following to DESE within 24 hours of the incident:

- Death of a child if the child died while in the care of the provider.
- Death of a child enrolled with the provider if the child died of a contagious disease.
- A serious injury to a child that occurred while the child was at the provider's facility or away from the provider's facility but still in the care of the provider, if any injury results in the child being treated by a medical professional or admitted to a hospital.

For substantiated child abuse and neglect reports, the Children's Division uses Preponderance of Evidence as the standard of proof that abuse or neglect has occurred. This is the degree of evidence that is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it or evidence which as a whole shows the act to be proved to be more probable than not.

Table 1

This table displays the annual number of serious injuries and deaths that were self-reported to have occurred in CCDF eligible child care programs in fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024). It also includes the total number of child care slots.

Provider Category and Licensing Status	FY 2024		
	Total # of Child Slots	# of Serious Injuries	# of Deaths
<i>Licensed</i>			
Child Care Centers	127,885	12	0
Group Child Care Homes	2,387	0	0
Family Child Care Homes	5,417	0	0
<i>License-Exempt</i>			
Religious Operated	*30,797	0	0
Nursery School		0	0
<i>Exempt**</i>			
Providers Caring for Six or Fewer Children	2,706	0	0
Other Exempt	***Not applicable	0	0

*The reported number is for total license-exempt child slots.

**Section 210.211, RSMo, outlines the types of child care programs that are not required to be licensed. Serious injury and death data for exempt programs in this table only reflects self-reports from programs contracted with DESE to receive child care subsidy on behalf of eligible families.

***DESE does not have a way to estimate the number of child care slots or the number of children receiving CCDF assistance for these programs.

Table 2

This table includes the annual total instances of substantiated child abuse and neglect that occurred in CCDF eligible child care programs in fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024).

	FY 2024
Total:	Coming Soon

Table 3

This table shows the annual number of serious injuries and deaths, and substantiated child abuse and neglect reports that occurred in licensed and unlicensed child care settings. This data is based on the calendar year (January 1 – December 30). This data does not include the total number of child care slots.

	2022	2023
Total Serious Injuries	1	13
Licensed Child Care Setting	1	13
Unlicensed Child Care Settings	0	0
Total Child Abuse and Neglect Reports Substantiated	17	15
Total Deaths in a Child Care Setting	5	4
Licensed Child Care Setting	1	1
Unlicensed Child Care Settings	4	3